THE SCUTTLEBUTT CHRONICLES

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VETERANS SERVICES SHASTA COUNTY

VSO Quarterly Newsletter

Volume No. 3, July – September 2019

Message from the VSO: Army Veteran, Celestina Traver M.A.

The summer time is when many of you go on vacation and travel out of town. Remember to let your local VA Clinic know so you can get seen at other VHA locations if you become ill or injured during your time away. We have beautiful lakes and hiking trails in the North State, so if you are 50% or greater then you are eligible for a free California and Oregon state park pass plus a Federal pass. Come on into our office and we can help you get these ordered. I wish everyone a safe and adventurous summer. Oh ya- try to stay cool. ☺

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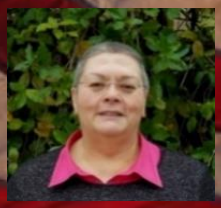

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COMING SOON
Part Time VSR

Rodney Black
USMC
Work Study

Did you know.... 4th of July

The Declaration of Independence

We celebrate American Independence Day on the Fourth of July every year. We think of July 4, 1776, as a day that represents the **Declaration of Independence** and the birth of the United States of America as an independent nation.

But July 4, 1776 wasn't the day that the Continental Congress decided to declare independence (they did that on July 2, 1776).

It wasn't the day we started the American Revolution either (that had happened back in April 1775).

And it wasn't the day Thomas Jefferson wrote the first draft of the Declaration of Independence (that was in June 1776). Or the date on which the Declaration was delivered to Great Britain (that didn't happen until November 1776). Or the date it was signed (that was August 2, 1776).

So what did happen on July 4, 1776?

The Continental Congress approved the final wording of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. They'd been working on it for a couple of days after the draft was submitted on July 2nd and finally agreed on all of the edits and changes.

July 4, 1776, became the date that was included on the Declaration of Independence, and the fancy handwritten copy that was signed in August (the copy now displayed at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.) It's also the date that was printed on the Dunlap Broadsides, the original printed copies of the Declaration that were circulated throughout the new nation. So when people thought of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776 was the date they remembered.

In contrast, we celebrate Constitution Day on September 17th of each year, the anniversary of the date the Constitution was signed, not the anniversary of the date it was approved. If we'd followed this same approach for the Declaration of Independence we would be celebrating Independence Day on August 2nd of each year, the day the Declaration of Independence was signed!

How did the Fourth of July become a national holiday?

For the first 15 or 20 years after the Declaration was written, people didn't celebrate it much on any date. It was too new and too much else was happening in the young nation. By the 1790s, a time of bitter partisan conflicts, the Declaration had become controversial. One party, the Democratic-Republicans, admired Jefferson and the Declaration. But the other party, the Federalists, thought the Declaration was too French and too anti-British, which went against their current policies.

By 1817, John Adams complained in a letter that America seemed uninterested in its past. But that would soon change.

After the War of 1812, the Federalist party began to come apart and the new parties of the 1820s and 1830s all considered themselves inheritors of Jefferson and the Democratic-Republicans. Printed copies of the Declaration began to circulate again, all with the date July 4, 1776, listed at the top. The deaths of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams on July 4, 1826, may even have helped to promote the idea of July 4 as an important date to be celebrated.

Celebrations of the Fourth of July became more common as the years went on and in 1870, almost a hundred years after the Declaration was written, Congress first declared July 4 to be a national holiday as part of a bill to officially recognize several holidays, including Christmas. Further legislation about national holidays, including July 4, was passed in 1939 and 1941.

SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

STAYING SAFE IN THE SUMMER: 7 TIPS FOR SENIORS

KEEP COOL.
Seniors are vulnerable to dangerous illnesses like heat exhaustion and heat stroke brought on by scorching summer heat. Don't stay in the sun for more than 1-2 hours at a time, and run the AC when in the home.

TAKE BREAKS DURING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.
Everybody loves to have fun in the sun, but seniors must be aware that summer's high temps and humidity wear your body out a lot quicker than in cooler weather.

STAY HYDRATED.
Older adults naturally feel less thirsty than younger people, making it more important to consciously drink more water than usual out in the sun to avoid dehydration.

WEAR SUNGLASSES.
The elderly are more susceptible to vision loss, so wear protective eyewear to protect from dangerous UV rays.

APPLY PLENTY OF BUG SPRAY.
Mosquitos can be carriers of diseases like West Nile Virus that pose a heightened risk to seniors. Coat your skin with bug spray to avoid bites.

MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION.
In case of emergency, make sure you'll be able to dial your loved ones or caregivers easily. Before outdoor activities like gardening, or exercise, let them know where you'll be and for how long.

AVOID THE OUTDOORS ENTIRELY ON VERY HOT DAYS.
Review the weather forecast or ask Alexa what the day's high will be. On scorchers, it's best to stay indoors entirely to avoid the risk.

ALARMS.ORG

Spending time outdoors this summer? Keep these safety tips in mind to ensure your furry friends are comfortable.

ASPCA

Sun & Heat

Pets can become dehydrated quickly. **Know the signs of overheating** (excessive panting, increased heart rate and weakness) and make sure your pet has access to fresh water and a shady or air conditioned place.

Fireworks & Thunderstorms

One in five pets goes missing after being scared by loud noises, so keep them in a quiet, secure area at home. If your pet does go missing, **download the ASPCA app** for a free step-by-step toolkit to help find your pet: **ASPCAapp.org**

Parties & Barbecues

Make sure your pet can't get into human food (especially grapes, onion, avocado and chocolate) or alcoholic drinks.

Hot Cars

Don't leave your pet in the car! Even with the windows cracked, a car's temperature can reach 100° in 10 minutes on an 85° day. Sign our hot car pledge at **aspca.org/hotcars**

Toxic Chemicals

Insecticides, insect repellents, sunscreen, citronella products and glow sticks are toxic, so keep them away from your pet.

HEAT EXHAUSTION	OR	HEAT STROKE
Faint or dizzy		Throbbing headache
Excessive sweating		No sweating
Cool, clammy skin		Red, hot, dry skin
Nausea or vomiting		Nausea or vomiting
Rapid, weak pulse		Rapid, strong pulse
Muscle cramps		May lose consciousness

- Get to a cool shaded area or air-conditioned place
- Drink water if fully conscious
- Take a cool shower or use cold compresses

COUNTY OF BENTON

- Call 9-1-1
- Take immediate action to cool the victim by any means until help arrives (ice bath, cold towels, etc.)

SUMMER SAFETY

WEAR A HELMET! every bike ride, every time

USE SUNSCREEN! at least SPF15, 30 min. before going out

WEAR EYE PROTECTION! when helping with yardwork or mowing

LIFE JACKETS ON BOATS* *even for really strong swimmers!

HIKE, BIKE, SWIM, EXPLORE ALWAYS with a friend, NEVER alone

BEAT THE HEAT! bring and drink water, wear hats, seek shade, and check for ticks if in the woods

REMINDER:

Although Shasta County Prohibits all Fireworks

If you will be traveling for the 4th, Please keep in mind....

Fireworks can be scary for pets, veterans with PTSD, kids with autism & others

EVENTS

July:

3rd-Anderson Explodes 4pm – 11pm
Shasta District Faire Grounds Concert & Fireworks

4th- Freedom Festival 7pm – 11pm
Redding Civic Center Auditorium Music &Fireworks

13th – Summer BBQ 2019-American Legion 197
Anderson River Park 10am – 2pm

13th- Anderson Police K9 Spaghetti Feed Fundraiser
Shasta District Fair Grounds 5pm

August:

2nd – Lassen Dark Sky Festival – Mineral Ca.

3rd – Rebuild WES Camp Fundraiser 5pm – 8pm
1700 Market Street, Redding

3rd – Water Lantern Festival 6pm – 10:30pm
Kutras Park, Redding

17th – Dive in Movie Night 7pm – 10pm
Redding Aquatic Center

31st – End of Summer Carnival 1pm – 4:30
Redding Aquatic Center

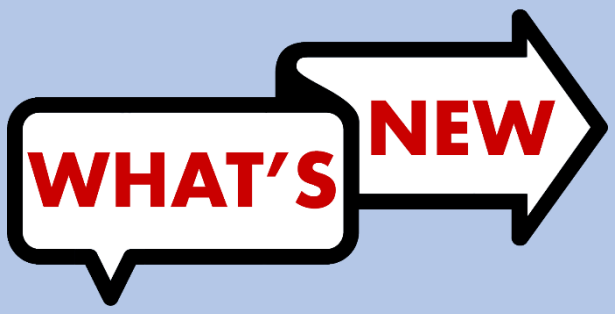
September:

3rd – Marilyn Miller Farmers Market
1700 Churn Creek, Redding

7th & 8th- Shasta Renaissance Faire
Shasta District Fair Grounds

14th – Hot Rods and Hot Dogs Show and Shine
9am – 2pm Cottonwood, CA

28th – 4th Annual Elks Lodge Event #1073 10am
250 Elk Dr., Redding



With the VA

VA launches new health care options under MISSION Act-

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) launched its new and improved Veterans Community Care Program on June 6, 2019, implementing portions of the VA Maintaining Internal Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks Act of 2018 (MISSION Act), which ends the Veterans Choice Program and establishes a new Veterans Community Care Program.
The MISSION Act will strengthen the nationwide VA Health Care System by empowering Veterans with more health care options.

"The changes not only improve our ability to provide the health care Veterans need, but also when and where they need it," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "It will also put Veterans at the center of their care and offer options, including expanded telehealth and urgent care, so they can find the balance in the system that is right for them."
Under the new Veterans Community Care Program, Veterans can work with their VA health care provider or other VA staff to see if they are eligible to receive community care based on new criteria. Eligibility for community care does not require a Veteran to receive that care in the community; Veterans can still choose to have VA provide their care.

Veterans may elect to receive care in the community if they meet any of the following six eligibility criteria:

- A Veteran needs a service not available at any VA medical facility.
- A Veteran lives in a U.S. state or territory without a full-service VA medical facility. Specifically, this would apply to Veterans living in Alaska, Hawaii, New Hampshire and the U.S. territories of Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- A Veteran qualifies under the "grandfather" provisions related to distance eligibility under the Veterans Choice Program.

VA cannot furnish care within certain designated access standards.

The specific access standards are described below:

Drive time to a specific VA medical facility

- Thirty-minute average drive time for primary care, mental health and noninstitutional extended care services.
- Sixty-minute average drive time for specialty care.

Note: Drive times are calculated using geomapping software.

Appointment wait time at a specific VA medical facility

- Twenty days from the date of request for primary care, mental health care and noninstitutional extended care services, unless the Veteran agrees to a later date in consultation with his or her VA health care provider.
- Twenty-eight days for specialty care from the date of request, unless the Veteran agrees to a later date in consultation with his or her VA health care provider.
- The Veteran and the referring clinician agree it is in the best medical interest of the Veteran to receive community care based on defined factors.
- VA has determined that a VA medical service line is not providing care in a manner that complies with VA's standards for quality based on specific conditions.

In preparation for this landmark initiative, senior VA leaders will visit more than 30 VA hospitals across the country to provide in-person support for the rollout.

*For more information on doctors, specialists, and urgent care facilities, visit:
https://missionact.va.gov/

For feedback and / or concerns, please call 1-844-698-2311

Veterans Corner

Service-connected disabled Veterans and Space-A Travel

When congress signed the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act last year, 100% service-connected disabled Veterans became eligible for Space Available Travel. Better known as 'Space-A' or military hops, Air Mobility Command (AMC) maintains an extensive network of flights throughout the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and American Samoa. Supplementing this network, several Air National Guard and Naval Aviation Units have flights available.

To be eligible for Space-A flights, Veterans must have a permanent and total service-connected disability rating. These Vets must also obtain a DD Form 2765, "Department of Defense/Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card (TAN).

The Space-A Program fills surplus capacity and seating on DOD aircraft. A popular perk among retirees, now eligible Veterans can take advantage of the program and fly for free. So, whether the Veteran is looking for a getaway to Hawaii or a trip to catch-up with their Veteran brothers and sisters on the other side of the country, the Space-A travel program can fly you there.

Eligible Veterans looking for flights should review schedules at AMC passenger terminals or go to https://www.amc.af.mil/Home/AMC-Travel-Site/AMC-Space-Available-Travel-Page/. Most AMC terminals on military bases or at commercial airports, have a Facebook page that posts flight schedules and seat availability. Once a flight and destination are selected the Veteran can register in person, either at the terminal, or by email/fax. (Adapted from VA.gov)

Please call or email your Shasta County Veteran Representative with questions
Thank you!

Victim to Victor Story

Many of us have a story to tell about how we became the person we present to the world. We see you- and we honor you

My journey to the VSO and the VA started when I entered the Army in 1996. I needed a change in my life and getting the military background would allow me to enter a career in Law Enforcement. I did not know at the time, but the change I entered the Army for would be become a challenge for the rest of my life. As a woman in the military I held my own with the men in basic training. I was praised for my sharp shooting and could physically keep up with anyone during drills. That came crashing down when I broke a bone in my pelvic region during a particularly long run.

It was this break that led to years of misdiagnosis, unnecessarily painful and intrusive exams and crippling anxiety. From this break I developed further complications that would ultimately lead to a hysterectomy and take my ability to have children of my own. By the time I was came out of the military, the mistreatment and mismanagement of my health had negative impact on all aspects of my life. I was in constant pain that hindered my ability to work for more than a year at a time. I could not trust anyone or any situation. My marriage at the time crumbled and ended. I felt abandoned by the army, depressed and in fear of what the future would bring. I lived like this for years.

I was fortunate to find a partner in life that understood what I was going through, but again my pain, anxiety and mistrust would create unique challenges. Years of private medical treatment could not erase the pain and depression I experienced.

It was not until sometime in 2015 that the VA reached out to me during an Obama administration push to get Women to take more advantage of our VA Benefits. Even then, I could not even start thinking of going back to the military for assistance. When they first called, I had been laid up for over 3 months. I would get some information, but just could not summon the strength to follow through.

In 2016, the change I needed came to me from a stranger that overheard my story as I was relating it to a friend. He handed me Celestina Travers' card at the VSO and said, "This woman is going to change your life." I was not even aware of local offices like the VSO. My husband and I took the opportunity and went.

From the moment we walked in at the Shasta Street office of the VSO, we knew we were at a place of understanding, compassion and caring. We met Celestina that day and knew we found someone that not only empathized with my past military experience but had the character and expertise to guide me to the benefits I had earned. Everything Celestina indicated that I would receive came true. It took time and opened up old wounds in the process as I had to endure several medical and psychological exams. Celestina remained true to us. She laid out clearly what I was about to go through upon each of my claims. She remained positive when I was not. She reached out when I would go silent and kept me going. We would win part of the claim, and she would bear down on how the denials were not correct. We would challenge denials and search through my medical records to find every last benefit to which I should win. And it all worked out as she had indicated.

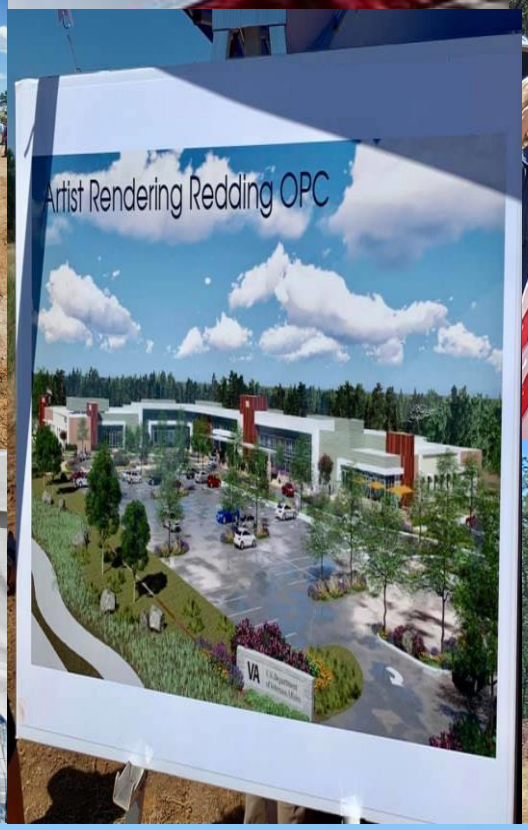
I still suffer from pain and anxiety, but having lifelong medical and psychological benefits from the VA, I have support of people that understand what I am going through. Even after gaining my benefits, Celestina showed me avenues that would have direct impact on my healing journey. She showed me how I can receive water therapy that has allowed me to better manage my physical pain. She even connected me with a Veterans Service Dog Training team. I never realized what a service dog could do to assist me with my fears and anxiety out in public.

My Experience with Celestina Traver and the VSO has led to Hope and Support via the VA. I cannot thank her and her team enough. I cannot encourage enough other servicemen and women to come here and start their journey for support.

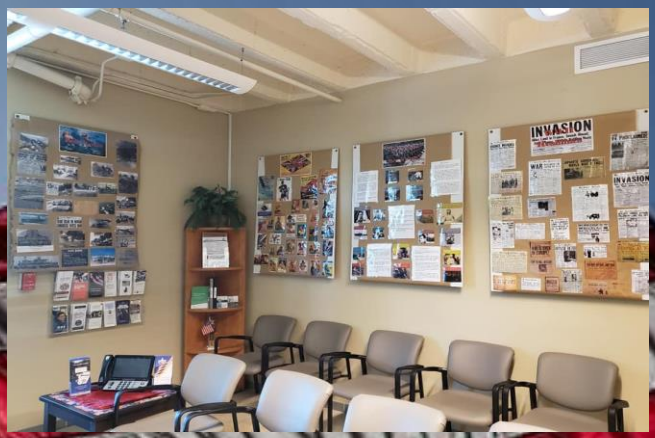
Carol,
US Army

What has the Office been up to this last Quarter? Here is a small look!

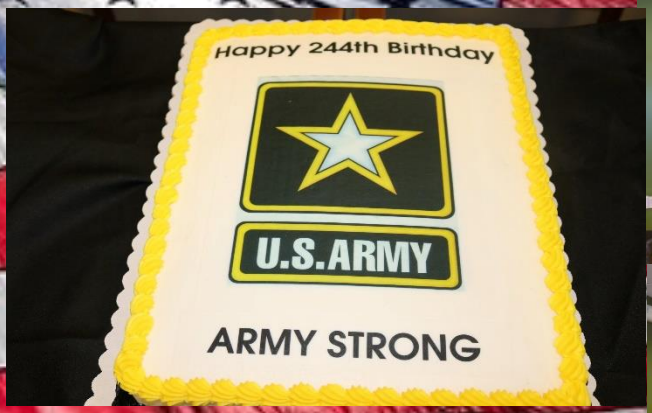
VA Clinic Groundbreaking Ceremony 05/13/2019

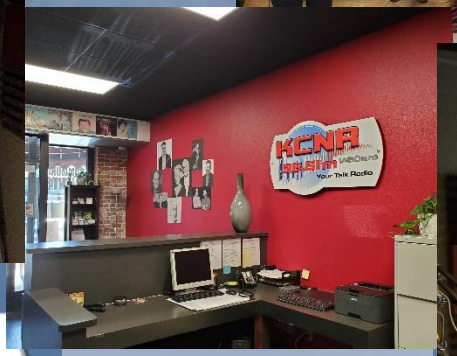


VSO D- Day Display June 6th 2019



U.S ARMY Birthday June 14th 2019





KCNR 96.5fm 1460am Your Talk Radio

VSO on Carl Bott

Last Wednesday of the Month 8am – 9am

Lawrence Dietz

Patton's U.S. Army, Purple Heart Recipient
Resident of the Redding Veterans Home of Northern California

On March 29- we had the honor of meeting a 94 year old Veteran who resides at the Redding Veterans Home.

Larry Dietz is a man who gifted us a colorful walk through the past and provided an insight into the infamous Patton's Army. Having joined the Army around 1942 in Michigan, Larry set off on a journey few have ever experienced. His military career included time in North Africa, Naples, Anjou, Rome, and Wales. His experiences through the years read like an adventure novel, riveting and at times humorous. He spoke to us of what a young man experiences seeing Africa through the eyes of a Michigan youth. He remembered the immense fruit in North Africa- so plentiful -the leftovers were dumped by truck loads into the ocean.

He told us of living in an underground fox hole for days, yelling at the Germans through the night and having to stay quiet through the day fearing the fate of friends.

He delighted in sharing with us the memory of colossal crowds cheering them as they marched through the streets of France and really seemed grateful for the short R&R in the English countryside after being shot and carried piggy back to safety by no other than a German who had surrendered.

Larry's experience in Patton's Army is more packed with life experience than some will ever know. He is a treasure and a wonderful addition to our Veteran community.

Thank you Larry for your service to this country. We salute you, and honor you.

Shasta County Veteran Services Office

Office: 530-225-5616
Fax: 530-245-6464

Walk-in only, No Appointments

Hours of Operation

Monday~Friday
8:30am – 11:30am
1pm-4pm

Address
1855 Shasta Street
Redding, CA 96001

Veterans Serving Veterans

Items to bring with you:

- DD-214
- Picture ID

Remember: if you lost your separation paperwork from the military, regardless of when, we can order it for you.
Visit our webpage for printable checklists.

vso@co.shasta.ca.us

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

TO PROMOTE THE HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELFARE OF LOCAL VETERANS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS BY ADVOCATING ON THEIR BEHALF TO THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL APEALS COURT IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THEM WITH BENEFITS AND SERVICES TO WHICH THEY MAY BE ENTITLED.